

REMARKS

Reexamination and reconsideration of claims 1-6 is respectfully requested. Claims 1-6 are pending. Claims 1-6 stand rejected.

Claims 1-6 were objected to as not positively recited. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended and are submitted to be positively recited. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the objection to claims 1-6 be withdrawn.

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 102(b) applying EP 0 777 298 A2 (EP counter part to US Patent 5,722,850 (collectively the "White reference") without a teaching reference. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1-6.

Claim 1 recites *inter alia* "the basic module configured such that one or more supplementary modules of different configuration than the basic module are connectable to the basic module, the combination of the basic module with the supplementary module modifying the configuration of the respective contact element". The White reference does not teach or suggest a "basic module configured such that one or more supplementary modules of different configuration than the basic module are connectable to the basic module". Rather the White reference teaches that "connectors to be stacked end to end such that the abutting end walls have a total width equal to that of a single tooth and the pitch of the contacts is not altered. This enables a number of connectors to be mounted on a long index strip". See Column 6, lines 11-18 of the '850 patent. Accordingly, claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over the White reference. Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1 and are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reason.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1-6 be withdrawn.

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In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw any objection(s) and/or rejection(s) to the claims and to reconsider the application. This request for reconsideration is fully responsive to the Office Action and the application is in condition for immediate allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowability for the pending claims. Applicants encourage the Examiner to contact the undersigned directly to further the prosecution of any remaining issues, and thereby expedite allowance of the application.

This Amendment does not result in more independent and/or total claims than paid for previously. Accordingly, NO fee is believed to be due. However, the Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any fee due in connection with the filing of this response, including any excess claims fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 not already accounted for, such an extension is requested and the fee should likewise be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. Any overpayment should be credited to Deposit Account No. 19-2167.

Respectfully submitted,



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